

# Response Statement - Northern Map Turtle

*December 18, 2013*

**Common Name:** Northern Map Turtle

**Scientific Name:** *Graptemys geographica*

**Status assessment by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC):** Special Concern

**How the Minister of the Environment intends to respond to the assessment:** The above assessment confirms the classification of the Northern Map Turtle which is already on Schedule 1, the *List of Wildlife Species at Risk*. This species will thus remain on the List as Special Concern and activities will continue to be undertaken in a manner consistent with the purposes of, and according to the timelines identified in, the *Species at Risk Act*.

**Reason(s) for status designation provided by COSEWIC:** There have been no quantitative, long-term studies of this species in Canada and, therefore, there is limited evidence of recent declines, range contraction or local extirpation of the species. However, the species' long-lived life history with delayed age of maturity and the potential threats to its habitat suggest that it is susceptible to population decline. Significant threats include direct mortality from collisions with motor boats and from commercial fisheries bycatch. Loss and degradation of shoreline habitat is another threat because this wary turtle is readily disturbed by human activity and boating, and shoreline developments interfere with the species' basking and nesting behaviour. Unnaturally high predation of nests by mammalian predators, especially raccoons, is another threat. If not ameliorated, these threats combined with the species' life history will cause the species to become Threatened in Canada.

**Occurrence:** Ontario, Quebec

**Competent Minister(s):**

Minister of Environment

Minister responsible for the Parks Canada Agency

**Other applicable legislation:** When the species is found within national parks of Canada or other lands administered by the Parks Canada Agency, it is protected or managed under the *Canada National Parks Act* or through measures or management tools available to the Parks Canada Agency under other legislation. , Where it occurs in a National Wildlife Area this species is subject to the *Wildlife Area Regulations* under the *Canada Wildlife Act*, which prohibits activities that could be harmful to species and to their habitat, unless a permit is issued indicating the permitted activity.

**Conservation activities underway:** A management plan for the Northern Map Turtle is in development.